Iodization of salt

2650. SHRI THENNALA G. BALAKRISHNA PILLAI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the WHO has confirmed that even a modest dietary intake of iodine by people who are not iodine-deficient will not be harmful but beneficial;

(b) whether Government will consider salt iodization as a public health measure and mandate for blanket iodination of salt at salt heads; and

(c) whether Government have laid down proper packing norms for the manufacturers of iodised salt?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) According to World Health Organization document No. WHO/NHD/01.1, Iodine deficiency disorders are easiest and most cost effective of all disorders to prevent. The addition of a small amount of Iodine to the salt that people consume every day is sufficient to prevent Iodine deficiency disorders.

Consumption of Iodised salt (as per standards laid down under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954)by people who are not Iodine deficient is absolutely safe.

(b) PFA Rules, 1955 have been amended *vide* GSR 670(E) dated 17.11.2005 whereby restrictions have been imposed on the sale of common salt for direct human consumption unless the same is iodized. However, common salt would continue to be sold for iodization, iron fortification, animal use, preservation, manufacturing of medicines and industrial use with the prescribed label declaration.

(c) Packing norms for iodized salt have not been prescribed under PFA Rules, 1955. However, as per practice the iodized salt is packed for retail sale in polythene packages and for bulk transporation it is packed in bags. The iodized salt is not transported in loose conditions.

To take care of loss of iodine during storage and transportation of iodized salt the parameter of iodine content in iodized salt has been prescribed both at manufacturer's level at not less than 30 ppm and at retail level at not less than 15 ppm.